Policy for promotion of tourism

325. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is some confusion regarding tourism promotion policy as reported in the Hindustan Times of the 22nd October, 1985;

(b) if so, what steps the Central Government propose to take to remedy the situation;

(c) what specific proposals are likely to be undertaken during the Seventh Plan period to boost tourism in the country;

(d) whether private sector participation will be considered for this purpose and if so, the nature of incentives to be provided to them;

(e) what is the number of foreign tourists expected in the country by Decebber, 1985 as compared to the preceding two years, year-wise; and

(f) what steps are being taken by Government to boost domestic tourism?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (f) During the Seventh Five Year Plan it is proposed to *inter-alia* continue the programme for development of tourism infrastructure with a view to expanding the tourist attractions of India including development of beach resorts, mountain resorts, winter sports, water sports, wildlife tourism, mountaineering and trekking, improvement and preservation of national heritage areas, development of buddhist tourism, provision of economy class accommodation for tourists, construction of yatrikas|dharamsalas at pilgrim centres, improvement in the quality and availability of surface transport facilities, promotion of international conferences and conventions, preparation of tourist publicity material, participation in promotional fairs and exhibitions abroad, joint promotion with international airlines, stepping-up of hospitality and media relations programme. For promoting domestic tourism specifically the Government have apart from the measures indicated above for infrastructural development, undertaken a regular print media campaign on domestic tourism and also encouraged ITDC, State Tourism Corporations, and Vayudoot to devise special packages. Also youth travel packages are being organised.

(d) With a view to attracting private sector investment, incentives extended to the hotel industry include Income Tax concessions under certain Sections of Income Tax Act, priority consideration in the allotment of scarcity items like LGP, telephone and telex, grant of foreign exchange for publicity, promotion and import of essential items including cars by Hotels of 3, 4 & 5 star category subject to fulfilment of prescribed conditions. Approved Hotel projects are eligible to apply for grant of loan by Industrial Financial Corporation of India on which Department of Tourism pays interest subsidy. Approved hotel projects set-up in selected backward areas are also eligible for subsidy under the Central Outright Grant of Subsidy Scheme, 1971.

(e) In 1983 and 1984 the foreign tourist arrivals, excluding nationals of Pakistan and Bangladesh, registered were 884,731 and 852,503 respectively. It is not possible to indicate the number of tourists who will come to India by December, 1985.

Decline in tourist traffic from South East Asia

326. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTRY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a considerable decline in tourist traffic from South East Asia during the last one year;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this decline;

(c) how many tourists have visited India from South East Asia during the last two years; and

(d) what steps Government are contemplating so as to increase the flow of tourists from South East Asia during the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) to (c) Foreign tourist arrivals from South East Asia consisting of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and other countries during the last two years and upto August 1985 were as given below:

Year	Tourist Arrivals	%Change
1983	61,154	. .
1984	57,676	−5·7
1985 (upto Aug.)	35,597	−9 9*

*As compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

The decline was mainly due to the adverse media coverage of some of the events in India during the latter half of 1984 and the first half of 1985.

The Government has already launched a publicity campaign in the major tourist generating countries for improving the image of India as a safe tourist destination and also for building up consumer interest. A special publicity drive has also been undertaken by the overseas Tourist Offices in Bangkok, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to project the attractions of India as the Cradle of Buddhism which is of special interest in these countries. Steps have also been taken to boost the public relations with tour operations and travel agents abroad through participation in international travel fairs and exhibitions and also by extending hospitality to them for visiting India.

Setting up of district level screening Committes for rehabilitation of bonded Labourers

327. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up district level screening Committees to regulate sanction and release of funds for the rehabilitation of bonded labourers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the number of bonded labourers who have been identified and freed and rehabilitated so far in each State and Union Territory;

(d) what steps are being taken to rehabilitate the remaining labourers; and

(e) what additional steps are being taken to identify bonded labourers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJAIAH): (a) and (b) The procedure for sanction of rehabilitation schemes has been simplified with effect from 17th September, 1985, whereby the State Governments have been allowed to delegate powers for sanction of rehabilitation schemes to the District Collectors/Divisional Commissioners by setting up Screening Committees at the district